

Asma's Conclusion

Asma and Taylor

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T: All right. So... This is your conclusion—

A: Yeah.

T: —And how you want to respond to, not only my analysis and my field notes, but the project as a whole.

A: Mhm.

T: Um... So, what do you think you have learned about yourself while doing this project, and what have you learned from this project?

A: This project, it was a... very hard project to... putting together and telling the story, where we end it today, where we will start it tomorrow, but I learn about... Um, how [clears throat]... How, how patient I was, to tell the, um... To tell my story, and sometime it-it make me emotional, sometime it—it make me, it make me to be with my family, my mom or my sister. There's a lot of memory when I was doing this proj-this process, but... Talking about my story, it was for some reason. It was two reason. The first reason was, um, to reach my voice there, why-while I was not allowed to do it.

T: Mhm.

A: I mean, I was little bit afraid, or maybe say, "Oh, you're not, uh, English, you not enough, um to speak English." Or maybe, "You're not enough, people know you." But you make me, um—Taylor make me strong, um... And a lot of think I can do it. Um, I mean, you, you lift me up to use my voice out there. I mean, there's nothing can stop you, you can, you can, you can, you can reach your voice so many people. And, and, a lot of people understand the refugees, those who *need it*, always. And that's not true.

T: Mm.

A: The refugees need it, a specific time and they will work as, as anyone like American work on their life. [taps table] I mean when you're in, in America, or maybe Australia or maybe in other world, so you have to start like other—those who live in that country. Is the same thing. I mean...

T: You live here, too.

A: Yeah, you live, you-you need to life, you don't need to someone feed you like a kids, so that's what I'm doing, and no one was know it.

T: Yeah.

A: Just—they all they know it, the refugee, they need it. They need it they need it they need it, and—

T: They just need help all the time.

A: Yeah, they always need help.

T: Yeah.

A: And that's not true.

T: That's not true.

A: That's not true. Yeah...

[fade]

T: In like the weeks since we've really seen each other, like since we've sort of done this, have you, have you thought about the project at all, like, like do you feel like it's... Like how do you feel now that you've done it? How do you feel now that you've shared your story?

A: Um, I felt we done for the recording?

T: Mhm.

A: But I was waiting for you, the way you are putting, the way you-you was collecting the process, project? But, the way... you did it, I mean you was sending me every project you done, if it's okay, or you waiting for me, if I agree with you [T laughs sheepishly]. And I was very very very very busy, and I was lazy for your job—

T: You weren't lazy—

A: Yeah, I—

T: You were busy.

A: I was very busy, I swear to God. [T chuckles] And I say...

T: I knew you were.

A: Yeah, and then I say, "Okay, later. I'm gonna check um-m-m how she did the project and when I find a lot of emails I say, 'Oh my gosh.' [T laughs] 'How I'm gonna finish all these?'" And I mean, the way you did, it was phenomenal, finally, I mean, you work very hard, you recorded, you analyzed, your um even, um... um, you even, um, introduce it, the stories. I mean, I *very* like it, I *never* expect it be like this way. I never expect it. I never.

T: Yeah?

A: The story is true.

T: Yeah. .

A: Our words is true. Everything we say, we recorded, we writed, is very true.

T: Yeah.

A: The way you finish the job?

T: Yeah?

A: I mean, it surprise me, it very surprise me.

T: It still feels like your story, though?

A: Yes! I am! Even when I read the analyzing, the analyzing is surprise me a lot.

T: Yeah?

A: I mean, I know my story, what, what words I already say... And when I listen again, it's very beautiful I never listen my voice before [we laugh]. I will never enjoy—I may listen my voice in the voicemail, but I-I-I never like it.

T: Mhm.

A: But the way you record, I listen my voice and I say, “Eh, I’m not bad!” [we laugh loudly] I used to afraid when I listen my voice, I was not comfortable.

T: Yeah.

A: But I keep continue listening, whole my, whole-whole recording, and then after that the way you analyzin’ is like, “Oh, am I that person real? Or maybe I’m the other one.” And everything you write is very true.

T: Yeah.

A: The way you thinking, it was very very clear... I mean, who I was. And I think maybe the audience will read and maybe they will, they have another think, but the way you talk, it was very clear and real and powerful, and I very loved it.

T: Okay!

A: I very loved it. And I wish I had, um, this summer, I will maybe have time to read it again and again, because I love my story...

T: Yeah.

A: I love—I love your analyze more than my story. [we laugh] Yeah.

T: Okay, so why do you think you like the analyzing more?

A: I mean the way you compare Malkki and my story?

T: Yeah.

A: And the way you, you touch specific points, you touching the important points?

T: Mhm.

A: But I—when you record it, I just talk and talk and talk and talk, and sometimes I mixing the story, I jump from the story to other story, but, um, I change it to the other subject, other subject, I’m mixing everything, but the way you’re separate the story was very very beautiful, like... The

way you separate like, “beautiful,” “falling in love,” something like that, the way you’re organize is very beautiful, and the way you analyze it—

T: I-I want to—I want to remind you that the story, the dividing of the story was actually *your* idea.

A: Yeah!—Oh, really? Yeah, I remember?

T: Yeah, that was you! You separated all those sections and named them.

A: Oh, yes, I remember, I remember the way, you, you show me and I just...

T: Yeah, yeah.

A: I took [??]

T: Yeah, yeah, and I honestly... Yeah, no. This... Even my analysis, the themes that you picked that were the most important were the things that I analyzed.

A: Wow, that’s so beautiful.

T: Yeah.

A: But the analyze it, was your own thought, and I enjoy reading, and, and also... When learning English is not easy, you know, I mean... It’s easy for you, is your original language, but is me, my third language maybe. [laughs as she speaks] My second language is Arabic, so this one is the third language.

T: Mhm.

A: And I also learn about you, and new words I never hear before, I was putting in Google Translation [we laugh] and find it out what was those, those, um, um, words? And um, and yeah, I enjoy it, and I hope... I hope I will read again and again and again, and I will read these, these analyze and story to my kids, too, so *you*... You didn’t only help me for putting my voice there. You make my life, eh, um... You make my life, um... Um, um... Story that’s never, never go. I mean, my story now is-is in the book, it’s in the recording, and it’s in the paper, and, and everywhere, so my kids, even if they didn’t... They didn’t um, they didn’t reach me until they grow up. Or maybe they didn’t—If I die, maybe some accident happen or something happen, so my kids... Is there. Paper, recording, everything. I’m-I’m look like published already [chuckles]. So my-my kids will never forget my story. And I will read them, I will listen them, when they grow up, and understand something. They are very young now, but yeah. You-you did—I mean, this project, is whole is real, very real, and I loved it, I loved it, even when you’re very busy—e-especially me, I was very busy. Same time, going to school, same time raising three little babies [breathy laugh] at home, uh same time going um, to work, for part-time work, and learning some eh, new language, is very hard too, and also, finishing your project is little bit happy for me, but there is so many many many many many many, um, so many experience I have it, and I have it before. I never sit with a real... American, people?

T: Mhm.

A: And get an interview with them. I never—The way I sit with you, maybe right now, six months, maybe five months we are together?

T: Six months.

A: Um, yeah, sitting and interviewing each other—you interview me, not each other [laughs]. Sometimes we see each other, sometime we talk, sometimes we fixing something, but I never spend a time with anyone who's um, from this country...for my life.

T: Yeah.

A: Yeah. This is the first time I sit with student, or maybe someone very real. Sit with every months with her, or with him. Yeah. And I have a lot of experience. You're normal, like me, you have a normal life, you are going to school... I was so afraid to make a friend, for a American friend.

T: Yeah.

A: Is because I hide it. The English is not my language, so I'm not comfortable, the way I speak, so you let me comfortable.

T: [murmurs]

A: Yeah. So you let me comfortable to speak. Whatever I say, you say, "Yes, go ahead. Don't worry about it." Just "I understand it." Thank you so much [grateful laugh].

T: Thank *you*.

A: Yeah, you're welcome. Thank you so much, I'm just enjoying. Um, and little bit overwhelming, busy, but I enjoy it. Yeah.

T: [murmurs] Same.

A: Sometime I get rest when I'm with you. [laughs]

T: Yeah?

A: I get rest the things I do.

T: You get stressed?

A: Rest. *Rest*.

T: Oh, okay. You get rest.

A: Yeah, relaxed. Doing the interview, you—maybe one hour, maybe hour and half?

T: Mhm.

A: I feel relaxed, is not make me tired, but moving around is busy time [laughs as she speaks]...

T: Yeah.

A: Yeah, yeah.

T: All righty so...

A: Yeah. You have another question? This is our final... Finish.

T: I guess that would be my last question.

A: Yeah?

T: Is there anything left that you wanna say to someone who is listening to this now, or in the future? Whether it's your kids, whether it's another American like me, whether it's somebody else in the world. What's the last thing you wanna say for this project, and for this story?

A: Um... What I wanna say to young, old, middle, kids, everybody... I mean, anyone. When God give you health, when God give you mind to understand... You... You have to be comfortable by yourself. Where—if you're sick, if you don't have a leg, if you don't have shoulder... If you don't have... God give you this world for some reason. You have to be that reason, be comfortable with yourself, who you are, always. Stick with who you are. Don't do anything by for someone else. I mean, I know the kids need... Need a—Kids need us to show us something good, when they do something bad we say, "This is bad." But, after you grow up, like um, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, you're not even enough grow up, but I-I say the words for me mom, before I travel, my mom she used to afraid to travel by myself, she told me, "You still kids." And I was seventeen that time, and I say, "Mom, I'm still kids. I know you're still scared for me, but... I know what I'm doing. I will not you..." I say, "I will not you, um, to... I will not you—I mean, I will not you fall, fall down, any, any day. I always let you to proud of me. To do the right thing, not the bad thing." Because sometime when you grow up, you know what you're doing the bad or the right. We can make eh good choices, there is *nobody* stopping us. And we can... throw out the bad things. Teenager always like to do the bad things, but it's your choice. If you follow the good things, good things coming to your life, too. That's what I will say. Stick who you are. Follow your decisions, follow your dreams, never feel a hopeless. Always, *always* you have to have a *dream*. You have to have dreams. Until you die. Ninety years. Have to have a dream, still. Ninety-one, hundred, never *never* be hopeless. Yeah. That's what I am. My dream go to the college, it was a *long* time. Maybe fifteen years, maybe thirteen years ago...

[fade]

A: No yeah, but I'm keep going. Yeah, I will never stop. I'll keep going until I put hat in my head. [laughs]

T: Yeah.

A: It's easy to say the words, but it's not easy to get what you want. Sometime you work—you have to work hard, and I *am* doing, I am even feel uh, lot of pressure for my financials, I am even feel a, on the time is not right for me, my kids are very young, but I all ignore that things and, and keep continue what I wanted to be. Yeah.

T: 'Kay.

A: Yeah. [pause] Yep. Follow your dreams. Work hard. And... Make all your decisions, and be comfortable who you are. Be comfortable. Black white, and overweight skinny, whatever you are [laughs] short tall...

T: Yeah.

A: Be happy. You-your world—to be happy wherever you are. You're life, you're pretty, you have to be happy. There is nothing else is missing you. Yeah.

T: That's perfect. That's beautiful.

A: Yeah, it's beautiful. And I wish everybody can have it. Yeah. Whatever time you have it, you have to grow up, be happy. Yeah. There's a lot of people, they don't have it. A lot of people, they come to the world and they die at a young age, like the way you say your sister. Um. Lot of people, um, they never see their child. It was in the way, but they never saw it, they die. Um. Some they're in coma. They didn't die, they didn't life. Um... They don't know nothing, they can't feed themselves. Some have a, some they need eh, as—as—assistant need it? For all their life. I mean, if you have all this ability to do something, yes, why not? Just... do it as much you can. And never pressure yourself, something you cannot do it. Maybe you need to think about the-the better way you do? But you cannot do something, never pressure—maybe one day you will do it, but dream it. Dream it. Keep continue dreaming. Yeah. Yeah, I don't... [dissolves into laughter]

T: Is that it?

A: Yeah, I don't...

T: Okay, we can stop.

A: Yeah...